

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-13, and 15-18 are pending in the present application. By this Response, claims 1 and 9-12 are amended and claims 2, 14, and 19-34 are canceled. Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 2. Claim 12 is amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 14. Claims 9-11 are amended for clarification purposes only by adding punctuation. No new matter has been added by any of the above amendments to the claims. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Applicants have amended claims 1 and 9-12, and canceled claims 2, 14, and 19-34 from further consideration in this application. However, Applicants are not conceding in this application that the unamended claims or the canceled claims are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner, as the present claim amendments and cancelations are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of the allowable subject matter noted by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue the unamended claims, the canceled claims, and any other claims in one or more continuations and/or divisional patent applications.

I. Telephone Interview

Applicants' representative contacted the Examiner to conduct a telephone interview prior to the response due date of the Office Action. However, a telephone interview was not able to be scheduled prior to the response due date. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact Applicants' representative to discuss this application prior to taking any further action on this case.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank Examiner Wood for the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2, 5-11, 14-15, 17-18, 20, 23-26, 28, and 31-34. By this Response, the allowable subject matter from dependent claims 2 and 14 is incorporated into their respective

independent claims 1 and 12. Thus, it is Applicants' understanding that all of the claims are now directed to allowable subject matter.

III. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

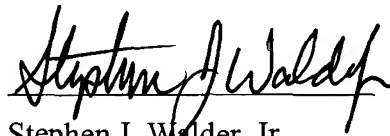
The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3-4, 12-13, 16, 19, 21-22, 27, and 29-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Cheng et al. (U.S. Patent Number 6,151,643). This rejection is respectfully traversed. By this Response, independent claims 1 and 12 are amended to incorporate allowable subject matter from claims 2 and 14, respectively. In addition, claims 19-34 are canceled. Thus, the only remaining independent claims now contain allowable subject matter. Therefore, the rejection is overcome by the above amendments to incorporate allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

IV. Conclusion

It is respectfully urged that the subject application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the Examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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